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Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

Letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I have the honour to request the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly of a supplementary item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum (see annex) in support of the request accompanies the present letter.

(*Signed*) Sergio **Vento**
Ambassador

00-53489 (E) 070800

Annex to the letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Explanatory memorandum

1. The Council of Europe, its mandate, structure, and membership

The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 as the first European political institution in Europe. The main aims of the Organisation are to achieve greater unity between its member States, through co-operation in all fields except military matters and on the basis of shared values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Only European States that respect these principles and that are genuine parliamentary democracies can join the Council of Europe. This implies that they must have a multi-party system and hold free and fair general elections at regular intervals.

The protection of human rights is an indispensable element for the functioning of a democratic and free society. The democratic rights and freedoms developed and protected by the Council of Europe are enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 and its various protocols as well as in other human rights instruments notably the European Social Charter. Other essential human rights instruments are the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture, the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities, as well as various other conventions and recommendations. Together these instruments have a significant impact on the policies of the member states in the areas of democracy and human rights.

The implementation and promotion of these principles constitute the specific mandate and «raison d'être» of the Council of Europe. In its essence, the Council of Europe is an alliance for the defence of these ideals. To that end, it has established a system of collective enforcement of the respect of human rights through mutual control. It also brings its members ever closer together through their equal participation in common activities to promote the implementation of its principles in response to changing challenges.

The Council of Europe covers all major issues facing European society other than defence. Its work programme includes the following fields of activity: human rights, media, legal co-operation, social and economic questions, health, education, culture, heritage, sport, youth, local and regional government and the environment.

The work in these fields has led, *inter alia*, to the adoption of 174 European conventions and treaties and numerous recommendations to the member states. These instruments form a corpus of harmonised law and legal and administrative procedures, thus creating the necessary administrative, legal and intellectual infrastructure in a united Europe. About 90 conventions are open to non-member states.

Concerning its structure, the Council of Europe is founded on three pillars: intergovernmental, parliamentary and judicial.

The Committee of Ministers, composed of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and their Deputies, is responsible for the intergovernmental activities involving a wide-range of special ministries of member countries, at the level of ministers, senior officials and experts as well as participants from universities and civil society.

The Parliamentary Assembly is composed of pluralist delegations from national parliaments and its deliberations cover all aspects of European co-operation; it plays an increasingly decisive role in the Council of Europe's politics and actions. Elected representatives from local and regional authorities, for their part, work together in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.

The European Court of Human Rights established under the European Convention on Human Rights constitutes the core element of the Council of Europe's judicial pillar. The Court has competence to issue binding judgements on cases submitted to it by member Governments and, more importantly, by persons or groups of persons under the jurisdiction of any of the member States. In addition, a number of other control mechanisms have been established under several European Conventions in such fields as the prevention of torture, social rights, the protection of national minorities, etc.

The enlargement of membership to now forty-one countries and the application for membership by all remaining European countries has extended significantly the geographic area of the Council of Europe by giving it a pan-European dimension. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Monaco have formally applied for membership to the Council of Europe. The Holy See, the United States of America, Canada, Japan and Mexico have obtained observer status.

2. Background and legal basis for co-operation with the UN

The co-operation between the Council of Europe and the United Nations started in 1951 with the Agreement between the Council of Europe and the Secretariat of the United Nations (15 December 1951).

This Agreement was updated in 1971 through the Arrangement on Co-operation and Liaison between the Secretariats of the Council of Europe and the United Nations (19 November 1971).

The Council of Europe has also concluded agreements with a number of UN bodies and specialised agencies as follows:

- Agreement between the Council of Europe and the International Labour Organisation (23 November 1951), completed by an Arrangement between the ILO and the Council of Europe on the creation and activities of the International Vocational Training Information and Research Centre (November 1962)

- Relations of the Council of Europe with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund - UNICEF (3 July 1952)

- Agreement between the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director of the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organisation - WHO (9 September 1952)

- Agreement between the Council of Europe and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation - UNESCO (10 November 1952)

- Agreement between the Council of Europe and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations - FAO (11 January 1956).

On 17 October 1989, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution, proposed by a number of Council of Europe member States, granting observer status for the Council of Europe to the General Assembly (Resolution 44/6). Under this Resolution, the Council of Europe is invited to participate in the sessions and work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer.

Furthermore, in order to update the agreement of 1952, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees signed in 1999 a Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation between the Council of Europe and the UNHCR.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

For its part, the Parliamentary Assembly has made its own arrangements for relations with the United Nations as well as with a number of UN bodies (e.g. UNHCR, UNDP, ECE/UN), and specialised agencies (e.g. UNESCO, ILO, IMF and the World Bank). Representatives from these organisations participate regularly in meetings of the committees of the Parliamentary Assembly. Furthermore, the Assembly holds debates at certain intervals on the work of these Organisations.

In this way, the Parliamentary Assembly follows closely the work of the United Nations with a view to formulating policy recommendations to the Committee of Ministers or to Council of Europe member States whenever appropriate.

An example is Recommendation 1408 (1999) on the International Criminal Court (ICC), inviting the member and observer States, *inter alia*, to ratify as soon as possible the Statute of the ICC, and to make a financial contribution towards the functioning of the Court.

3. Forms of co-operation

The co-operation arrangements between the United Nations and the Council of Europe provides for relations, notably through:

- exchange of documents and publications;
- regular contacts between officials from both sides;
- mutual consultation between both Secretariats on the implementation of programmes;
- attendance by representatives of the UN Secretariat in meetings of organs of the Council of Europe and vice versa,
- inter-Secretariat meetings.

The most relevant areas of co-operation are: human rights, humanitarian issues and refugees, legal questions, social questions, culture and education. The following recent examples may illustrate the Council of Europe's contributions to major tasks or activities carried out by the United Nations.

UNMIK

The crisis in Kosovo prompted the Council of Europe to support the efforts of the United Nations in search of a peaceful settlement and to offer its co-operation, in its fields of competence, to political and institutional reconstruction in the region. The Council of Europe declared its readiness to contribute to the implementation of Resolution 1244 of the United Nations Security Council by establishing close working relations with UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo) and the other international organisations active in the area.

In 1999, the Council of Europe began working in Kosovo on legislation and reforms to bring it in line with Council of Europe texts such as the European Convention on

Human Rights, on restructuring and reforming the judiciary, on the establishment and functioning of self-government, the protection of minorities, property rights and population registration. It was also active in such areas as training programmes, fighting trafficking, childhood and youth programmes, and education policies.

In order to co-ordinate the Council of Europe's activities in Kosovo, a Secretariat Office in Pristina became operational on 23 August 1999 with the purpose of maintaining contacts with UNMIK and its various components, in particular the OSCE, the UNHCR and the European Union.

UN Special Session "Women in 2000"

The Council of Europe participated actively in the Special Session of the General Assembly on "Women in 2000" (New York, 5-9 June 2000), highlighting in particular the Council of Europe's work to combat trafficking in women for sexual exploitation and its activities in favour of gender mainstreaming. Prior to this Special Session, ECOSOC issued a document containing an overview of all Council of Europe activities on gender equality, which was presented to the Regional Preparatory Meeting on the 2000 Review of Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (Geneva, 19-21 January 2000).

UN Special Session "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development"

The Organisation participated in a similarly active manner in the Special Session of the General Assembly on the "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development" held in Geneva from 26 to 30 June 2000. The Council of Europe's contribution focused on its strategy for social cohesion, particularly the protection of social rights, access to housing, employment and social protection and family and children policies. The Council of Europe submitted to this Special Session a political message adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 11 May 2000.

In addition to presenting this political message, the Council of Europe organised, prior to this Special Session, an International Conference on "The Dual Challenge of Globalisation and Transition: the Role of Civil Society in Fostering Social Cohesion". The Conference - which was held in the framework of the Council of Europe Campaign "Globalisation without Poverty"- brought together government and civil society representatives and the UN agencies concerned to assess the major policy challenges for improved social development in central and eastern Europe and to strengthen the voice and the role of civil society in transition countries.

2001 World Conference on "Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance"

At the invitation of the European Union, the Council of Europe is co-ordinating European preparations for the World Conference in the form of a pan-European Conference on these topics, to be immediately preceded by a forum for non-governmental organisations. This Conference will be held at the Council of Europe from 11 to 13 October 2000. The United Nations will be invited to participate.

Regular Participation in UN meetings

The Council of Europe participates regularly in the meetings of the Third Committee of the General Assembly (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs), in the sessions

of the Commission on Human Rights, and in the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe organises every year an exchange of views on the United Nations with regard to human rights questions with experts from capitals. This meeting analyses the results of the General Assembly session and prepares for the annual sessions of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva.

4. Practical arrangements for co-operation

Tripartite High-Level and Target-Oriented Meetings

Over recent years, the Council of Europe has been involved in renewed co-operation with the United Nations, mainly in relation with crisis situations in Europe. In 1993, the UN Office in Geneva, the OSCE and the Council of Europe established the practice of holding Tripartite High-Level Meetings to exchange information and to promote co-ordination of activities in areas of common concern. These meetings, which focus on such issues as the reform process in countries of central and eastern Europe, the fight against international crime, racism and intolerance and refugee problems, take place every year and are hosted on a rotating basis.

The last such High-Level Tripartite Meeting took place on 25 February 2000 in Geneva, with the participation of the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the IOM, the ICRC, and the European Commission. It centred on progress towards peace and stability in South Eastern Europe.

Special target-oriented tripartite meetings are also organised, such as the ones on the Caucasian Republics in November 1997, on Albania in April 1998, on the reform of the judicial system in February 1999, and on "Law Enforcement, in particular the Police" in February 2000.

Fourth meeting between the United Nations and the Heads of Regional Organisations

The Council of Europe participated for the first time in a high-level Meeting of Heads of Regional organisations convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations, held in New York, on 28-29 July 1998. The Council of Europe will also contribute to the forthcoming meeting between the United Nations Secretary General and the Heads of Regional Organisations, on the theme of "Co-operation for Peace-Building". These High-Level Meetings allow the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to share the Organisation's expertise with other participants.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Liaison Office

The UNHCR has opened a liaison office in Strasbourg in order to facilitate the close co-operation that has evolved between the Council of Europe and the UNHCR with regard to refugee protection and related issues, in particular human rights and legal standards.

Other forms of contacts

For an overview of all contacts between the United Nations and the Council of Europe in 1999 see Annex I.

5. Conclusion

The Council of Europe, as the only pan-European organisation, is in a position to make a substantial contribution to the United Nations in meeting an increasing number of challenges. The Council can contribute effectively to increase the democratic stability in Europe. It can also substantially contribute in fields where its expertise is well recognised, in particular as regards the building of pluralistic democracies based on the rule of law and respect for human rights. In this way the Council of Europe can enhance, particularly on the European continent, the ideals laid down by the Charter of the United Nations, and also contribute to their promotion in other parts of the world.

At the dawn of the new century, it would seem timely for the General Assembly of the United Nations to examine ways and means of bringing forward already advanced co-operation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Consequently it would appear appropriate to authorise the Secretary General to explore - in close consultation with the Council of Europe - all possible means for strengthening relations between the two organisations, and to report back to the General Assembly so that it can decide on suitable means for developing this co-operation.

Appendix

Relations between the United Nations and the Council of Europe*

Parliamentary activities

On 21 June 1999 the Assembly adopted Resolution 1411 on relations with the United Nations which aims in particular at promoting co-operation between the two organisations. It also encourages the development of co-operation between the Council of Europe and the various bodies and specialised agencies of the UN.

The Sub-Committee on Relations with European non-member Countries (of the Political Affairs Committee) met in New York from 26 -28 October 1999, participated in the 54th General Assembly of the UN, in the general meeting of parliamentarians who participated in the General Assembly, and met with the President of the UN Security Council, the Secretary General of the UN and high ranking UN officials.

On 25-26 October 1999, the President of the Assembly, Lord Russell-Johnston, participated in the 54th General Assembly of the UN. On this occasion, he met with the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan.

High-level contacts

The 8th High-Level Tripartite meeting between the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the United Nations, with the participation of the International Organization for Migrations and the International Committee of the Red Cross, was held in Strasbourg on 12 February 1999.

The overall theme was the development and consolidation of democratic stability. Co-operation between the participating organisations was discussed with regard to the crises in the Balkans and the Caucasus, as well as the questions of common concern relating to electronic information exchange.

The objective of these yearly meetings is to improve concrete co-operation between the above-mentioned Organisations. By sharing information and drawing on each other's expertise, the participating organisations aim to achieve an increased efficiency and synergy of efforts in carrying out their mandates.

On 22 April1999, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr Daniel Tarschys, paid a visit to the United Nations in New York. On this occasion he met with Sir Kieran Prendergast, United Nations Under-Secretary General responsible for the Political Affairs Department.

On 7 May 1999, Mr Vladimir Petrovsky, Director General of the United Nations Office in Geneva, attended the 104th session of the Committee of Ministers and took part in the events commemorating the Council of Europe's 50th anniversary.

* Extract from the *Report on the Activities of the Council of Europe in 1999.*

On 18-19 November 1999, the newly elected Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr Walter Schwimmer, met with the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan, on the occasion of the OSCE Istanbul Summit.

On 26 November 1999, Mr Petrovsky visited the Council of Europe and met with the Secretary General and senior officials.

In 1999, the Council of Europe was represented at the following meetings:

- meeting between the UN, OSCE, EU and NATO, organised with the purpose of defining and distributing tasks in the civil implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 on Kosovo, Geneva, 16 June 1999;

- the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly on the Implementation of the Outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and Further Initiatives, 19-21 May 1999, New York;

- Regional Symposium organised by the UN on Socio-Economic Policies during Macro-Economic Stabilisation in Countries with Economies in Transition, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, 9-11 November 1999.

United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)

The Council of Europe was represented at the 42nd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Vienna, 16-25 March 1999.

Representatives from the UNDCP attended the Conference on co-operation in the Mediterranean region, whose aim was to set up professional networks in the field of Demand Reduction and Epidemiology of Drug problems, Malta, 15-17 November 1999.

The UNDCP is a member of the Management Committee for the Demand Reduction Staff Training Programme and part funds the epidemiology training programme for six central and eastern European countries.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE)

Parliamentary activities

A delegation from the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development attended the Annual Session ECE, in Geneva, from 4-6 May 1999. The main topic was the economic recovery in south-eastern Europe after the settlement of the conflict in Yugoslavia. The delegation also attended the ECE Annual Spring Seminar on "Ageing in the 21st Century", on 3 May 1999.

UN/ECE representatives participated in the hearing organised by the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities on „ Further Action to be taken by the Council of Europe in Environmental Protection", Paris, 20 May 1999.

Intergovernmental activities

Social cohesion and health

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE) attended an inter-secretariat meeting with the Council of Europe and Eurostat, aimed at harmonising the collection by international organisations of data from the National Statistical Offices.

The UN/ECE was also represented, as an observer, at the following meetings:

- European Population Committee (CDPO), Strasbourg, 2-4 June 1999;
- Group of specialists on fertility and new types of households and family formation in Europe (PO-S-FF), Strasbourg, 27-28 September 1999.

The Council of Europe attended:

- the Hague International Forum on the International Conference on Population and Development +5, the Hague, 8-12 February 1999;
- the UN/ECE Conference on "The status on the older population: prelude to the 21st century", Sion, 13-15 December 1999.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

Intergovernmental activities

In 1999, the Council of Europe took part in a number of meetings at the Unesco headquarters in Paris. These include:

- meeting with Permanent Delegations on the "Slave Route" project, 21 January;
- Unesco-Commonwealth Symposium "Towards a constructive pluralism", 29-30 January;
- the 19th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), 23-26 March;
- the 156th session of the Executive Board, 25 May – 11 June;
- the 157th session of the Executive Board, 5-20 October;
- the 30th session of the General Conference, 26 October – 17 November.

Higher Education and Research

The Council of Europe and UNESCO conduct a joint programme on the recognition of qualifications. This programme comprises a joint legal framework – the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which now has been ratified by 14 states and signed by a further 24 states – as well as a joint practical framework for the development of recognition policies - the ENIC Network. The ENIC Network holds one annual meeting, jointly with the NARIC Network of the European Union. The ENIC Bureau

meets three times a year, jointly with the NARIC Advisory Board. The Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee met for the first time in June 1999.

The Council co-operates with UNESCO on action in favour of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the setting up of a Higher Education Council.

Culture and education

On 1 March 1999, the Committee on Culture and Education of the Parliamentary Assembly met with representatives from the Unesco Secretariat in Paris.

In September 1999, the Cultural Policy and Action Division participated in a UNESCO working meeting held in Gällöfsta (Sweden), which was to devise tools and methods of the newly established Cultural Policies for Development Unit at UNESCO Headquarters.

The Cultural Policy and Action Division also participated in a conference on "Culture counts: financing, resources and the economics of culture in sustainable development", Florence, 4-7 October 1999.

The conference was hosted by the World Bank and the Government of Italy in co-operation with UNESCO. The Division was responsible for the organisation of two events:

1. a thematic working group on "Cultural policy and democratic sustainable development: the Art of regeneration partnership proposal in South East Europe";

2. a seminar on "Public and private partnerships: the challenge for cultural policy in the 21st century".

The Council of Europe has invited UNESCO as a special partner for the European Year of Languages (EYL). UNESCO has expressed its intention to participate actively by implementing the PERICLÈS project (Programme Expérimental pour relancer l'Intérêt de la jeunesse en faveur des Cultures et des Langues limitrophes à partir de l'Environnement naturel et des Sites patrimoniaux).

UNESCO was represented at the informal meeting of the Ministers of Education of South-East Europe, Strasbourg, 2-3 December 1999.

Cultural Heritage

There have been frequent contacts with the UNESCO in the framework of the "Europe, a common heritage" campaign.

The Council of Europe was represented at the following meetings:

- 10th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation, 25-28 January 1999;

- the International Congress on Risk Preparedness and Disaster Mitigation for Cultural Heritage, 23-24 September 1999;

- the 12th General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage.

Sport

The Council of Europe participated at the Third International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS III), Punta del Este, Uruguay, December 1999.

Environment

The Council of Europe was represented at a meeting with Permanent Delegations on Biosphere Reserves and the World Solar Programme 1996-2005, Paris, 7 September 1999.

United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

Parliamentary activities

The Sub-Committee on Children of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee organised jointly with UNICEF a Conference on „ Children's rights in Albania: new priorities on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child " in Tirana on 10 December 1999. The aim of the conference was to alert policy-makers and the community at large to the necessity to take account of children's needs and respect their rights.

Intergovernmental activities

UNICEF was represented at the second meeting of the Forum for Children, and at the informal meeting of the Ministers of Education of South-East Europe, Strasbourg, 16 April 1999 and 2-3 December 1999 respectively.

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)

Parliamentary activities

On 19 April 1999, the Sub-Committee on Human Rights of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights held an exchange of views with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs Mary Robinson in Geneva.

Intergovernmental activities

The Council of Europe regularly informs the UNHCHR on its activities regarding questions of mutual concern such as contemporary forms of slavery, the protection of the rights of children and women migrant workers, and sexual exploitation.

In 1999, the Council of Europe was represented at the following meetings:

- 55th session of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, 22 March-30 April 1999, Geneva;

- Second Consultative Forum on Long-Term Strategies to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Balkan Region, Geneva, 28 July.

On 17-18 May 1999, the UNHCHR was represented at the Human Rights Training for Field Operations: A Joint Approach – OSCE, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe and European Commission, Elaboration of a joint trial course, Strasbourg.

On 15 October 1999, Mrs Mary Robinson addressed a message to the Global Forum for Poverty Eradication "Poverty: A Violation of Human Rights", jointly organised by the North-South Centre and the Global Solidarity Campaign of the Council of Europe. Mr Berthie Ramcharan, Deputy United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights chaired the Forum.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

On 25 August and 4 October 1999 respectively, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr Daniel Tarschys, and the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs Sadako Ogata, signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation between the two Organisations, providing for a number of modalities for co-operation between the two organisations.

Parliamentary activities

The Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography co-operates regularly with UNHCR.

Intergovernmental activities

In 1999, the Council of Europe was represented at the following meetings:

- Urgent High-Level meeting of the Humanitarian Issues Working Group to focus on developments in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Surrounding region, Geneva, 6 April;

- Steering Group on the follow-up to the Regional Conference to address the problems of refugees, displaced persons, other forms of involuntary displacement and returnees in the countries of the Commonwealth of Interdependent States and relevant neighbouring states, Geneva, 24-25 June;

- 50th Session of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the UNHCR, 4-5 October;

- First meeting of the CIS Conference Working Group to address the issue of the follow-up to the 1996 CIS Conference, Geneva, 13 October;

- Working Group of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), Geneva, 8 December 1999.

The UNHCR was represented at the meeting of the European Committee for Migrations (CDMG), held in Strasbourg, on 1-3 December 1999.

Office of the High Representative (OHR)

The OHR was represented at the informal meeting of the Ministers of Education of South-East Europe, Strasbourg, 2-3 December 1999.

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Intergovernmental activities

The Council of Europe was represented at the Second International Labour Organisation (ILO) Enterprise Forum on the theme of "Promoting social progress and enterprise competitiveness in a global economy" in Geneva on 5-6 November, 1999.

The ILO was represented at the first meetings of the following Committees:

- Committee of experts for co-ordination in the social security field (CS-CR), Strasbourg, 13-15 April 1999;

- Committee of experts on standard setting instruments in the field of social security (CS-CO), Strasbourg, 6-8 July 1999;

- Committee of experts on Promoting Access to Employment (CS-EM), Strasbourg, 26-27 October 1999.

The ILO also participated in the following meetings of the Partial Agreement in the social and public health field:

- the 5th session of the Working Group on employment strategies for persons with disabilities (P-RR-SEH), Strasbourg, 15-17 March 1999;

- the 22nd session of the Committee on the rehabilitation and integration of people with disabilities (CD-P-RR), Strasbourg, 9-11 June 1999.

World Health Organisation (WHO)

Legal co-operation

The Council of Europe participated in the Consultation "Ethical Issues in Genetics, Cloning and Biotechnology: Possible Future Directions for WHO" in Geneva in December 1999.

WHO participates as an observer at the meetings of the Working Party on Xenotransplantation (CDBI-CDSP/XENO).

Social cohesion and health

The Council of Europe, the European Commission and the World Health Organisation (Regional Office for Europe) jointly run the European network of health promoting schools.

Within the framework of this activity:

- an annual business meeting of national co-ordinators was held in Lisbon, Portugal, from 26 to 28 May 1999, and

- a first international Conference on promoting mental health in schools, hosted by Finland, took place on 13-14 September 1999.

WHO was represented at the following meetings:

- 22nd meeting of the Select Committee of experts on quality assurance in Blood Transfusion services (SP-R-GS), Warsaw, 2-5 February 1999;

- 3 meetings of the Group of specialists on quality assurance for organs, tissues and cells (SP-S-QA), Strasbourg, 25-26 March, 14-15 October and 9-10 December 1999;

- 1st and 2nd meetings of the Working party on xenotransplantation (CDBI/CDSP-XENO), Strasbourg, 19-21 April and 17-19 November 1999;

- 45th and 46th meetings of the European Health Committee (CDSP), Strasbourg, 29-30 June and 13-14 December 1999.

The WHO took part in the following meetings of the Partial Agreement in the social and public health field:

- the 43rd session of the Committee of experts on pharmaceutical questions (P-SP-PH), Solothurn, 20-22 April 1999;

- the 44th session of the Committee of experts on pharmaceutical questions (P-SP-PH), Strasbourg, 19 October 1999;

- the Seminar "The Pharmacist at the crossroads of new health risks: an indispensable partner for their management!", Strasbourg, 20-22 October 1999.

Representatives from the WHO attended the Conference on co-operation in the Mediterranean region, Malta, 15-17 November 1999, to set-up professional networks in the field of Demand Reduction and Epidemiology of Drug problems.

The WHO co-organised the seminar on "Attention deficit/hyperkinetic disorders: their diagnosis and treatment with stimulants", Strasbourg, 8-10 December 1999.

The WHO is also a member of the Management Committee of the Demand Reduction Staff Training Programme.

World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)

WIPO participates in the work of the Group of Specialists on the protection of rights holders in the media sector (MM-S-PR) in an observer capacity. It was represented at the three meetings of the Group in 1999, 3-4 March, 2- 3 September and 24-26 November 1999.

World Bank

Intergovernmental activities

In 1999, the Council of Europe took part in the Fiscal Decentralisation Initiative, a co-operation project between the World Bank, the OECD and the Council of Europe.

Higher Education and Research

The Council of Europe co-operates with the World Bank on actiсn in favour of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including on the setting up of a Higher Education Council.

Cultural Heritage

There have been frequent contacts with the World Bank in the framework of the "Europe, a common heritage" campaign. There have also been fruitful contacts with the World Bank concerning aid offered to the Romanian government for cultural heritage rehabilitation.

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Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session

Observer status for the Inter-American Development Bank in the General Assembly

Letter dated 27 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean countries for the month of July 2000, and in accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I have the honour to request the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly of a supplementary item entitled "Observer status for the Inter-American Development Bank in the General Assembly", taking into account the mandate that the Group gave me in the meeting of 25 July 2000.

An explanatory memorandum (see annex I) in support of the above request and a draft resolution (see annex II) are attached to the present letter, in accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

I further have the honour to request that the present letter and its annexes be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Arnoldo M. **Listre**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations and
Chairman for July 2000
Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries

00-59054 (E) 140800

Annex I to the letter dated 27 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Explanatory memorandum

The Inter-American Development Bank, the oldest and largest regional multilateral development institution, was established in December of 1959 to help accelerate economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Bank was created in response to a longstanding desire on the part of the Latin American nations for a development institution that would focus on the pressing problems of the region. The Bank's original membership included 19 Latin American and Caribbean countries and the United States. Subsequently, eight other Western Hemisphere nations, including Canada, joined the Bank.

From the beginning, the Bank developed links with many industrialized countries on other continents and in 1974 the Declaration of Madrid was signed to formalize their entry into the Bank. Eighteen nonregional countries joined the Bank between 1976 and 1993. Today Bank membership totals 46 nations.

In addition to the Bank, the IDB Group consists of the Inter-American Investment Corporation (IIC) and the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF). The IIC, an autonomous affiliate of the Bank, was established in 1989 to promote the economic development of the region by financing small and medium-scale private enterprises. The MIF was created in 1992 to promote investment reforms and to stimulate private-sector development.

In its 40 years of operations, the Bank has become a major catalyst in mobilizing resources for the region. The Bank's Charter states that its principal functions are to:

- Promote the investment of public and private capital in the region;
- Use its own capital and to mobilize funds for high-priority economic and social projects;
- Encourage private investment contributing to economic development and to supplement private investment whenever necessary;
- Provide technical cooperation for preparing, financing and carrying out development plans.

In carrying out its mission, the Bank has mobilized financing for projects that represent a total investment of $240 billion. Annual lending has grown dramatically from the $294 million in loans approved in 1961 to $9.5 billion in 1999.

The Bank's operations cover the entire spectrum of economic and social development. In the past, Bank lending emphasized the productive sectors of agriculture and industry, the physical infrastructure sectors of energy and transportation and the social sectors of environmental and public health, education and urban development. Current lending priorities include poverty reduction and social equity, modernization and integration, and the environment.

During the 1960s and 1970s the Bank was a pioneer in financing social projects such as health and education. The Bank has made an effort to see to it that its lending operations directly benefit low-income populations. Its innovative Small Projects Program seeks to provide small financings to microentrepreneurs and small-scale farmers and since 1990 the Bank has broadened its support to the informal sector. In recent years, the Bank has financed sector reform loans and debt reduction programs. In 1995, it began lending up to 5 percent of its ordinary capital resources directly to the private sector, without government guarantees.

The financial resources of the Bank consist of the ordinary capital account comprised of subscribed capital, reserves and funds raised through borrowings and Funds in Administration, comprised of contributions made by member countries. The Bank also has a Fund for Special Operations for lending on concessional terms for projects in countries classified as economically less developed.

The Bank has borrowed funds for its operations from the capital markets of Europe, Japan, Latin America, the Caribbean and the United States. The Bank's debt is AAA rated by the three major rating services in the United States, and is accorded equivalent status in the other major capital markets.

The Board of Governors is the Bank's highest authority, on which each member country is represented. Governors are usually Ministers of Finance, Presidents of Central Banks or officers of comparable rank. The Board of Governors has delegated many of its operational powers to the Board of Executive Directors, which is responsible for the conduct of the Bank's operations. The Bank, whose headquarters are in Washington, D.C., has Country Offices in each of its borrowing member countries and in Paris and Tokyo.

The priority areas for future IDB lending include many for which an increased exchange with the United Nations General Assembly would be mutually beneficial. As examples, these include: protecting the environment; strengthening civil society; investing in information technology; promoting private sector lead growth; and modernization and of the State.

The IDB enjoys observer status in the United Nations Economic and Social Council and has working arrangements/memorandums of understanding with certain other economic bodies and organizations in the United Nations family, including IFAD, FAO, WHO and UNDP. During the past thirty years the IDB has utilized the expertise of these and other UN agencies to execute a large number of its loans and technical cooperation grants. Bank officials have been invited over the years to address the Second Committee of the General Assembly on selected development issues. However, the ad hoc arrangements for observing selected General Assembly sessions, particularly on environment, economic and social development have become increasingly unworkable. The IDB considers it timely and desirable to consolidate its links with the United Nations, and that observer status in the General Assembly would be mutually beneficial.

Therefore, pursuant to a decision taken by its Board, the IDB requests that it be granted observer status in the General Assembly. The observer status sought for the IDB would cover all bodies within its framework.

Annex II to the letter dated 27 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Draft resolution

Observer status for the Inter-American Development Bank in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-American Development Bank,

1. *Decides* to invite the Inter-American Development Bank to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolution.

United Nations A/55/193

General Assembly

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Fifty-fifth session

Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Letter dated 28 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I am hereby requesting the inclusion, in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, of a supplementary item entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations peacekeeping operations". Since this is a financial matter, we believe that it should be considered in the context of the work of the Fifth Committee.

Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, this request has been accompanied by an explanatory memorandum (see annex).

(*Signed*) Juan Gabriel **Valdés**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

00-59029 (E) 030800 030800

Annex

Explanatory memorandum

The growing importance of United Nations peacekeeping operations, the increase in the volume of resources needed to carry them out effectively, the precariousness of their financial situation and the need to institutionalize the methodology for calculating each country's financial contributions warrant the inclusion of the item "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations peacekeeping operations" in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Our country, as a manifestation of its commitment to the protection of the universal values set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, and aware of its responsibility for contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security, has striven to increase significantly its participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Currently, members of the Chilean armed forces and police force are serving in the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). In this context, it may be emphasized that, last year, we commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of uninterrupted participation in peacekeeping operations.

Accordingly, the Government of Chile, with a view to providing the greatest possible support to global peacekeeping, has amended its legislation to facilitate the contribution of human and material resources from our armed forces and police force. As a result, last year Chile signed a memorandum of understanding on stand-by arrangements, contributing troops whose importance stems from the technical quality of their personnel and equipment, and seeking thereby to reduce the needs of the current inventory of the United Nations stand-by arrangements system.

In view of the foregoing, which reflects our sustained commitment to the peacekeeping operations of this Organization, we consider it important to continue to make every effort to ensure that these activities are adequately financed. To this end, we reiterate the need to institutionalize the methodology for determining the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations peacekeeping operations.